REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims. Currently, claims 1-47, 49, 51, 54, 56 and 57 remain pending in the current application, including independent claims 1, 27, 37, 47, and 54. As shown above, independent claims 1, 27, 37, 47, and 54 have been amended. Support for these amendments can be found throughout the present application and specifically on pg. 2, lines 25-30; pg. 7, lines 3-10; in the description of Figures 1-15, and in the examples.

In the Office Action, claims 1-46, 49, and 51 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 in view of U.S. Pat. No. 3,879,257 to Gentile, et al. in combination with Cabell, et al. Also in the Office Action, claims 47, 54, 56, and 57 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 in view of U.S. Pat. No. 6,458,447 to Cabell, et al. The Office Action relies on Cabell, et al. to provide a pattern that reduces the Poisson ratio of the web. Cabell, et al. is generally directed to a paper web comprising a plurality of first and second regions. The first regions form boundaries separating the second regions. The second regions are a plurality of raised out-of-plane rib-like elements. The first and second regions undergo geometric deformation when the web material is subjected to an applied elongation along at least one axis. See, Abstract.

However, Applicants respectfully submit Cabell, et al. does not disclose or suggest a pattern that imposes a reduced Poisson ratio in the width and length directions to the web, as required by pending independent claims 1, 27, 37, 47, and 54. To the contrary, the web of Cabell, et al. works directly with the Poisson laws in the length and width directions: "the first regions 60 contract in a direction generally perpendicular to the applied loading, in a two-dimensional, geometric manner generally in the plane of the paper web." Col. 8, ll. 59-62, emphasis added. Cabell, et al. goes on to state that this contraction is "analogous to a two dimensional Poisson effect." Col. 8, ll. 62-65.

In fact, Cabell, et al. relies on the normal Poisson effect to increase bulk in response to extension in at least one direction, by relying on the normal contraction of the web in the perpendicular direction of the extension force. Col. 9, ll. 8-10. Applicants respectfully submit that Cabell, et al. fails to teach or suggest a pattern that results in a reduced Poisson ratio in the width and length directions. As such, Applicants

respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 27, 37, 47, and 54 are patentable over Cabell, et al., either alone or in any combination.

Applicants also respectfully submit that for at least the reasons indicated above relating to corresponding independent claims, the pending dependent claims patentably define over the references cited. However, Applicant also notes that the patentability of the dependent claims certainly does not hinge on the patentability of independent claims. In particular, it is believed that some or all of these claims may possess features that are independently patentable, regardless of the patentability of the independent claims.

Applicants also submit that the present application is in complete condition for allowance. Should any questions or issues remain, however, after consideration of this response, then Examiner Watkins is invited and encouraged to telephone the undersigned at his convenience.

Please charge any additional fees required by this response to Deposit Account No. 04-1403.

Respectfully submitted,
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